

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 16, 2016

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

## ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2311

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Introduced by Assembly Member Brown

February 18, 2016

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An act to add Sections 8588.20, 8598.5, and 8635.5 to the Government Code, relating to emergency services.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2311, as amended, Brown. Emergency services: sign language interpreters.

Existing law establishes the Office of Emergency Services within the office of the Governor and under the supervision of the Director of Emergency Services and makes the office responsible for the state's emergency and disaster response services for natural, technological, or manmade disasters and emergencies. Existing law requires every state agency and officer to cooperate with the secretary in rendering all possible assistance in carrying out the provisions of the act.

This bill would require the office, *in cooperation with the Office for Access and Functional Needs*, to provide or contract for a disaster response sign language interpreter ~~certification~~ *credential* program to train ~~individuals on the use of~~ American Sign Language *interpreters* to effectively communicate public safety information. The bill would additionally require every state agency and every local agency to utilize a sign language interpreter who has completed that ~~certification~~ *credential* program to provide interpretation services at every media or public briefing *and any emergency shelter* where actionable information will be disseminated before, during, or after a state of war emergency,

state of emergency, or local emergency. By increasing the duties of local officials, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: yes.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Section 8588.20 is added to the Government  
2 Code, immediately following Section 8588.15, to read:

3 8588.20. The office ~~shall~~ *shall, in cooperation with the Office*  
4 *for Access and Functional Needs, or its successor*, provide, or  
5 contract for, a disaster response sign language interpreter  
6 ~~certification credential~~ *program*, which shall train ~~persons on the~~  
7 ~~use of~~ *American Sign Language interpreters* to effectively  
8 communicate public safety information.

9 SEC. 2. Section 8598.5 is added to the Government Code, to  
10 read:

11 8598.5. Every state agency shall utilize a sign language  
12 interpreter who ~~has completed the disaster response sign language~~  
13 ~~interpreter certification program as~~ *holds a disaster response sign*  
14 *language interpreter credential pursuant to the program* specified  
15 in Section 8588.20, to provide interpretation services at every  
16 media or public briefing *and any emergency shelter* where  
17 actionable information will be disseminated before, during, or after  
18 a state of emergency, state of war emergency, or local emergency.

19 SEC. 3. Section 8635.5 is added to the Government Code, to  
20 read:

21 8635.5. The governing body of a local agency shall utilize a  
22 sign language interpreter who ~~has completed the disaster response~~  
23 ~~sign language interpreter certification program as~~ *holds a disaster*  
24 *response sign language interpreter credential pursuant to the*  
25 *program* specified in Section 8588.20, to provide interpretation  
26 services at every media or public briefing *and any emergency*

1 *shelter* where actionable information will be disseminated before,  
2 during, or after a state of emergency, state of war emergency, or  
3 local emergency.

4 SEC. 4. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that  
5 this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to  
6 local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made  
7 pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division  
8 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

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